

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR THE  
AUSTIN URBAN FOREST PLAN: A MASTER PLAN FOR PUBLIC PROPERTY**

Texas A&M Forest Service

Pease Park Conservancy

Austin Trail Foundation

Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center

Great Austin Parks Call to Action



December 13, 2013

Austin City Council  
301 W. Second Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Austin City Council,

Proper planning is the foundation of efficient and effective urban forest management. Austin's Urban Forest Plan: A Master Plan for Public Property will provide an important framework to focus the efforts of staff, local partners, and the public to improving improve Austin's urban forest. I support the efforts of the City of Austin's Tree Board, Urban Forester, other staff members, and the citizens that have contributed to this product.

My organization appreciates the opportunity to work with the Urban Forestry Board and staff in the development of the plan. Collaboration is one of the most important tools in planning, policy, and management, and the City of Austin has been has demonstrated exemplary their cooperation in this process. The Texas A&M Forest Service believes Austin's Urban Forest Plan will create a foundation on which to manage its urban forest. I offer my continued assistance as this plan is implemented, evaluated, and adjusted.

On a personal note, I have enjoyed getting to know and work with Angela Hanson, Michael Embesi, the Parks and Recreation staff, and the Urban Forestry Board. I look forward to future collaborations with the City of Austin.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Hamel".

Brad Hamel  
Central Texas Regional Urban Forester

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR THE  
AUSTIN URBAN FOREST PLAN: A MASTER PLAN FOR PUBLIC PROPERTY**

**Pease Park Conservancy**

-----Original Message-----

From: [richardcraig2004@yahoo.com](mailto:richardcraig2004@yahoo.com) [mailto:[richardcraig2004@yahoo.com](mailto:richardcraig2004@yahoo.com)]

Sent: Thursday, January 02, 2014 11:34 AM

To: Riley, Chris

Subject: Email from austintexas.gov to All Council Members: Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

On behalf of the Pease Park Conservancy, I wish to voice our support for the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan that will come before you in January. The plan represents three years of hard work and over 2,000 public comments. It has been before the Environmental Board and the Urban Forestry Board and incorporates their input and suggestions.

Austin's tree canopy is much beloved but, has suffered from an acute lack of public funding and focused attention. This document gives us an action plan or road map for the future to translate that affection into action.

With climate change and the ongoing drought of record, we cannot wait to get the focus back on our urban forest. We need to plant more trees and care for the existing ones if we are to mitigate the inevitable impact of climate change and the urban heat island effect these actions are critically important.

We all are very grateful to Angela Hanson and her staff at Forestry for their work on this and to Sara Hensley for her support. They deserve all our thanks.

We urge you to adopt the Comprehensive Urban Forestry Plan when it comes before you for adoption so that we can all move forward and give our Urban Forest the attention it deserves.

Sincerely,

Richard Craig  
Chairperson, Pease Park Conservancy  
(512) 925-5306

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR THE  
AUSTIN URBAN FOREST PLAN: A MASTER PLAN FOR PUBLIC PROPERTY**

**Austin Trail Foundation**

**From:** Susan Rankin [<mailto:susan@thetrailfoundation.org>]

**Sent:** Thursday, January 02, 2014 12:50 PM

**To:** [Christopher.Kite@austintexas.gov](mailto:Christopher.Kite@austintexas.gov); [Peggy.Maceo@austintexas.gov](mailto:Peggy.Maceo@austintexas.gov);  
[Patrick.Brewer@austintexas.gov](mailto:Patrick.Brewer@austintexas.gov); [Nicholas.Classen@austintexas.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Classen@austintexas.gov);  
[Ryan.Fleming@austintexas.gov](mailto:Ryan.Fleming@austintexas.gov); [len.newsom@austintexas.gov](mailto:len.newsom@austintexas.gov); Hanson, Angela

**Subject:** Urban Forestry Plan

Re: Comprehensive Urban Forestry Plan

The Trail Foundation (TTF) supports the adoption of the Comprehensive Urban Forestry Plan as the needed long-range vision and comprehensive framework for Austin to use in managing the public urban forest.

We have a few specific comments:

- As part of the important implementation process, TTF will continue to work the parks groups' coalition to grow annual City budget support for PARD Forestry.
- TTF supports the plan's broad view of urban forests as not just the trees but also the other components of a forest including understory shrubs, grasses, and other plants.
- We will continue to collaborate with PARD Forestry to increase the age and species diversity of trees at the Butler Trail.
- We note that the plan includes as a challenge the lack of a citywide tree inventory; we will do our part as we work with PARD Forestry, Watershed Protection, and the Texas Conservation Corps toward not only a Trail-wide urban forestry inventory but also a Trail-wide management plan and doing Trail-wide on-the-ground work toward sustainable succession.

The adoption of this plan will go a long way toward providing the City the scientific, economic, conservation, recreational, and public opinion bases for the needed funding to take care of our urban forest.

Sincerely,

Susan Plettman Rankin  
Executive Director  
The Trail Foundation

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Susan Plettman Rankin  
Executive Director  
The Trail Foundation

Please support Austin's crown jewel by becoming a member of The Trail Foundation,  
[www.thetrailfoundation.org](http://www.thetrailfoundation.org)



4801 La Crosse Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78739  
512.232.0100  
[www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)

October 21, 2013

Sara Hensley, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin  
Austin, TX

Dear Director Hensley,

On behalf of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin, I would like to commend City of Austin staff and the citizen-based Urban Forestry Board for their work on Austin's Urban Forest Plan (AUFPP). The plan is exceptionally well crafted from current conditions in the State of the Urban Forest to the Implementation Goals. More importantly, the plan was the product of community engagement and provides a clear path for the protection of this essential environmental, economic and community asset we know as the urban forest.

The Wildflower Center has a long history of working closely with the City of Austin to manage and conserve its green infrastructure. Together, we helped create the City of Austin's Invasive Species Management Plan. Together, we collaborated on botanical and horticultural information for the city's Grow Green guide and program. Together, we work together to ensure Austin has a healthy, vibrant and sustainable green infrastructure.

Our mission...*to increase the sustainable use and conservation of native wildflowers, plants, and landscapes*...guides all that we do. Our mission is closely aligned with the goal and objectives of the Urban Forest Plan. For that reason, we support your plan and stand ready to assist the City of Austin as it implements the objectives and policies of the Urban Forest Plan.

On a personal note, I would like to congratulate the city's urban forester, Angela Hanson, for achieving what seemed like an impossible task when I served on Austin's Urban Forestry Board in 2007-08. During that period I witnessed firsthand the challenges of pulling this plan together. Her extraordinary initiative, effort and vision for Austin's urban forest have made this plan possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Waite".

Dr. Damon E. Waite  
Senior Director & Botanist  
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Austin, Texas

## **Great Austin Parks (GAP) Call to Action**

This call to action was distributed by the Great Austin Parks coalition to their members.

### **AUSTIN'S URBAN FOREST PLAN: A MASTER PLAN FOR PUBLIC PROPERTY**

Following on the heels of [Great Austin Park's](#) successful campaign to increase funding to the Parks and Recreation Department and numerous public urban forest plans recently featured by [Alliance for Community Trees](#), the City of Austin has released a draft [Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan](#). The City of Austin's [Urban Forester](#) and the [Urban Forestry Board](#) have been working on the plan for nearly 36 months and have received more than 2,000 public comments. The fruit of their labor is timely; City Council recently voted to increase funding for forestry maintenance on public land and the public is increasingly aware of the value of trees since the record breaking tree loss caused by the drought and heat of 2011. This Plan provides the 30,000 foot view that will guide public urban forest policy across City departments.

Why do we need this plan? More people than ever before now live in urban areas where the health of trees has been under increasing pressure from drought, disease and development. Trees have well documented economic, environmental, and public health benefits. Like other city infrastructure, tree planting and care must be part of work and budget planning. A city that lacks adequate planning or funding for trees will not have an urban forest for long. Not only is it fiscally, socially, and environmentally sound for the City of Austin to develop and implement a comprehensive urban forest plan, it was also mandated by city code § 6-3-5 in 1992.

***Please review the plan and provide comments, letters of support, or suggestions for improvement to:***

***City Council:*** <http://www.austintexas.gov/mail/all-council-members>

***Urban Forestry Board:*** <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/boards/results.cfm?bid=53>

***City Forester:*** [angela.hanson@austintexas.gov](mailto:angela.hanson@austintexas.gov)

Remember that this Plan is intended to guide resources to maximize the benefit of trees on **public land** which includes trees along the Right of Way and in public spaces. The majority of land ownership is private and it takes conscientious stewards, like you to plant and care for many more trees across Central Texas.

Attachment: Draft Neighborhood Resolution.

## Great Austin Parks (GAP) – Draft Resolution

This draft resolution was distributed by the Great Austin Parks coalition to their members.

### [XXXXXX] NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the [XXXXXXX] Neighborhood Association at its meeting on [DATE], approved the following resolution and determined that it should be submitted to the Mayor and City Council of Austin in connection with their deliberations on the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan:

WHEREAS, the [XXXXXXX] Neighborhood Association finds that the urban forest is vitally important to the quality of life of the citizens of Austin and to their physical and mental health. These trees and their associated ecosystems represent the environmental, cultural, and aesthetic heritage bequeathed to our city and should be passed on to future generations in as good or better condition as when we collectively inherited them. We have a responsibility to posterity for their proper care and upkeep. Therefore, it is necessary that the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan to enable the Urban Forester to properly plan and care for our urban forest.

FURTHERMORE, Austin's tree canopy has been severely compromised by decades of the Parks and Recreation Department operating under staffed and under budgeted. Additionally, the exceptional drought and record breaking heat of 2011 killed an estimated 10% of trees across Texas. Trees that survived have been severely stressed and will continue to succumb due to secondary and tertiary factors including soil compaction, continued drought, and insect or disease infestation. If Austin values its trees and is serious about mitigating the impact of the urban heat island, and climate change the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan must be approved and implemented.

THEREFORE, we strongly urge the Mayor and the Austin City Council to approve the Comprehensive Urban Forest Plan as approved by the City of Austin Urban Forestry Board.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day [DATE].

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Chairperson  
[XXXXXXX] Neighborhood Association